

Chinese Language

I. Chinese Pinyin

What is a typical Chinese syllable in Pinyin?

hǎo 好

initial	final + tone
h	ǎo

A. Initials in Pinyin:

/h/ /t/ /d/ /n/ /l/

Labial	b	p	m	f	
Blade-alveolar	d	t	n		l
Velar	g	k		h	
Palatal	j	q		x	
Front alveolar	z	c		s	
Post-alveolar	zh	ch		sh	r

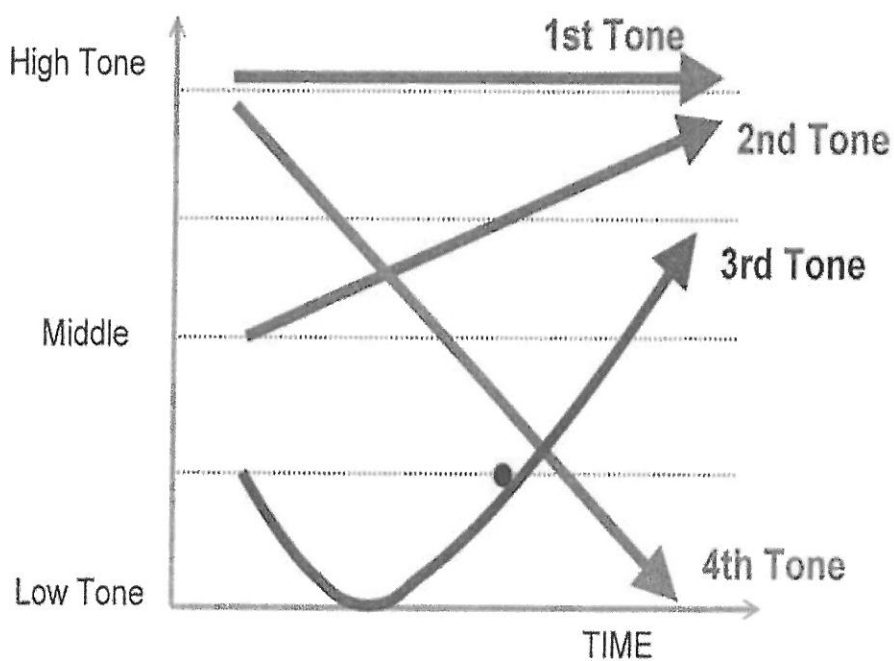
B. Finals in Pinyin:

6 simple finals:	a o e i u ü
13 compound finals:	ai ao ei ia iao ie iou (iu) ou ua uai üe uei (ui) uo
	er
16 nasal finals:	8 front nasals: an en ian in uan üan uen (un) ün

8 back
nasals:

ang eng iang ing iong ong
uang ueng

C. Tones in Pinyin



● When 2nd tone follows after the 3rd tone, the 3rd tone stops here.

Chinese Tones

V_{iccs}
www.vub.ac.be/biccs

mā 妈——starting high and keeping level (mother)

má 麻——rising from middle to high (hemp)

mǎ 马——falling first and rising (horse)

mà 骂——starting high and falling abruptly (to scold)

ma 吗——an interrogative particle

D. Just for your reference

Initials:

Letter	Pronunciation	Letter	Pronunciation	Letter	Pronunciation
B	As in bay	G	As in go	Sh	As in shirt
P	As in pay	K	As in kit	R	As in leisure
M	As in may	H	As in hit	Z	As in reads
F	As in fat	J	As in jeep	C	As in hats
D	As in dad	Q	As in cheer	S	As in say
T	As in time	X	As in she	W	
N	As in nay	Zh	As in junk	Y	
L	As in lay	Ch	As in church		

Finals:

a	māma 妈妈	uo	zuò 坐; wǒ 我
o	wǒ 我	an	gǎnmào 感冒
e	gēge 哥哥	en	nǐmen 你们
i	dìdi 弟弟	ian	míngtiānjiàn 明天见
u	wūya 乌鸦	in	nínhǎo 您好
ü	yú 鱼	uan	nuǎnqì 暖气; wánxiào 玩笑
ai	Shànghǎi 上海	üan	měiyuán 美元
ei	Běijīng 北京	uen(un)	kūnchóng 昆虫; <i>in sekt</i> qǐngwèn 请问
ao	lǎoshī 老师	ün	jūnrén 军人
ou	dōu 都	ang	zǎoshanghǎo 早上好
ia	xiàtiān 夏天	eng	lěngqì 冷气
ie	yě 也	iang	Xiānggǎng 香港; yáng 羊
iao	jiào 叫; yào 要	ing	Yīngyǔ 英语
iou(iu)	yǒu 有; qiūtiān 秋天	iong	xióng 熊 yóuyǒng 游泳
ua	guāzi 瓜子; wàzi 袜子	ong	tóngxué 同学
uai	huài 坏; wàiyǔ 外语	uang	chīguāng 吃光; shàngwǎng 上网
ue	xuéxí 学习	ueng	lǎowēng 老翁
uei(ui)	duì 对; wěidà 伟大		

II. Useful words and phrases:

A. Orientation and Geography

Pinyin	English	Pinyin	English	Pinyin	English
东 dōng	East	湖 hú	lake	渠 qú	canal
西 xī	West	河 hé	river	街 jiē	street
南 nán	South	山 shān	mountain	路 lù	road
北 běi	North	海 hǎi	sea	巷 xiàng	lane
		湾 wān	gulf		

B. Number

Number	Pinyin	Number	Pinyin	Number	Pinyin	Number	Pinyin
1	yī	6	liù	11	shí yī	31	sān shí yī
2	èr	7	qī	12	shí èr	100	yì bǎi
3	sān	8	bā	20	èr shí	200	èr bǎi
4	sì	9	jiǔ	21	èr shí yī	1,000	yì qiān
5	wǔ	10	shí	30	sān shí	10,000	yí wàn

qiān wàn
 million 4 万
 shí yì
 billion + 亿
 100 million 1 亿

C. Useful phrases:

English	Pinyin	English	Pinyin
I	wǒ	Hello!	Nǐ hao!
we/us	wǒ men	Goodbye.	Zài jiàn.
you	nǐ / nǐ men (plural)	Thank you.	Xiè xie.
he / she / it	tā	Please	Qǐng
they / them	tā men	You're welcome.	Bu kè qì.
Excuse me.	Qǐng nǐ yuán liang.	I'm sorry.	Duì bu qǐ.

English	Pinyin	English	Pinyin
How much is it?	Duō shǎo qián?	train station	huǒ chē zhàn
That's too expensive.	Tài guì le.	airport	fēi jī chǎng
My name is...	Wǒ jiào...	bus station	qì chē zhàn
I'm from...	Wǒ shì cóng...lái de.	hotel	jiǔ diàn / fàn diàn
Where is the...?	...zài nǎ lǐ?	hospital	yī yuàn
I'm lost.	Wǒ mí lù le.	restaurant	cān tīng / fàn diàn
What's the time?	Jǐ diǎn le?	shop	shāng diàn
I fell ill.	Wǒ bù shū fu.	police	jīng chá
Could you help me?	Nǐ kě yǐ bāng wǒ mā?	restroom	cè suǒ
I would like...	Wǒ xiǎng yào...	train	huǒ chē

I need...	Wǒ xū yào...	taxi	chū zū qì chē/chū zū chē
I want to go to...	Wǒ yào qù...	bank	yín háng
Do you have...?	You méi you...?	book	shū
Here is my address	Zhè shì wǒ de dì zhǐ	map	dì tú

D. Useful sentences:

1. Greeting

Hello!	Nǐ hǎo!
Good morning!	Zǎo shàng hǎo!
Good afternoon!	Xià wǔ hǎo!
Good evening!	Wǎn shàng hǎo!
Good night!	Wǎn ān!
Sorry.	Duì bù qǐ (or Bao qian).
Excuse me (or us)	Lǎo jiā (or Qīng yuán liang).
Thank you!	Xiè xiè!
Very Good!	Hěn hǎo!
Good-Bye!	Zài jiàn!

2. Introduction

My name is David.	Wǒ jiào David.
I am from America.	Wǒ cóng Měiguó lái. Wǒ shì Měiguó rén.

3. Ask for Assistance

I am lost. Can you help me?	Wǒ mī lu le. Qǐng bāng zhù wǒ?
Do you speak English?	Nǐ jiāng Yīngyǔ ma?
I want to go to hotel.	Wǒ yào qù jiǔ diàn.
This is the address.	Zhè shì dì zhǐ.
Where can I find a restroom?	Nǎr yǒu cè suǒ?
Where is the entrance?	Rù kǒu zài nǎ lǐ?
Where is the exit?	Chū kǒu zài nǎ lǐ?
Where can I find a telephone	Nǎr yǒu diàn huà?
I am hungry (thirsty or tired)	Wǒ ē (kě, lèi) le.

4. Shopping

How much?	Duō shǎo qián?
Too Expensive.	Tài guì la.
I don't want this one.	Wǒ bù yào zhè ge.
Do you have anything cheaper?	Yǒu pián yi de ma?
This one is very beautiful	Zhè ge hěn piào liang.
This one is too big (or small).	Zhè ge tài dà / tài xiǎo.